

On page 7, line 6, after "GenBank", please insert -(accession nos. AF069984-AF069989)--.

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**IN THE CLAIMS:**

10 Please AMEND Claim 11 as follows:

**11.** (ONCE AMENDED) The nucleic acid of claim 10 in which the Nit1 protein is a human Nit1\_protein.

15 Please CANCEL Claims 13 to 16 without prejudice.

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**REMARKS**

25 This responds in full to the non-final Official Action mailed September 27, 2000. This response is timely filed by virtue of the enclosed Petition for Extension of Time, extending the time for response through and including March 27, 2001. Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

By the foregoing amendment, the specification has been amended to contain a specific reference to the prior application in the first sentence of